

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY INR/DDC:JJHITCHCOCK:MCAULIFFE/NOYES:SW

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

INFO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 194943 TOSEC 200076

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FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINR

SUBJECT: SOVIET TU-114 FLIGHTS THROUGH RABAT

1. SOVIET TU-114 AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN REFUELING AT RABAT SINCE JULY 1973 ON WHAT ARE BELIEVED TO BE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT MISSIONS FOR TU-95 (BEAR) NAVAL RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OUT OF CUBA AGAINST US AND OTHER NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE ATLANTIC. SINCE MARCH 1974 THERE HAVE BEEN 19 SUCH FLIGHTS, ALL UNDER AEROFLOT COVER SO ARE PROBABLY UNNOTICED IN THE FLOW OF SOVIET COMMERCIAL AIR TRAFFIC TO AND THROUGH RABAT. CIA, DIA AND WE DOUBT THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE NATURE OF THESE FLIGHTS. EVEN IF WE TOLD THEM,

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THEY MIGHT NOT TAKE ANY ACTION BECAUSE OF THEIR DEPENDENCE

ON SOVIET IMPORTS OF THEIR CITRUS CROP, ON SOVIET SUPPLY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS AND ON CONTINUING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND CUBA.

2. IN VIEW OF CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN USG AND GOM, WE DEEM IT ADVISABLE TO INFORM MOROCCANS ORALLY, DISCREETLY AND AT VERY SENIOR LEVEL THAT THEIR FACILITIES ARE BEING UTILIZED BY MOSCOW TO SUPPORT SOVIET MILITARY SURVEILLANCE DIRECTED AGAINST THE EAST COAST OF THE UNITED STATES. WITH PROSPECTIVE DENIAL TO SOVIETS OF CONAKRY

ROUTING (CONAKRY 1538 NOTAL), DENIAL OF RABAT WOULD OBLIGE USSR TO SHIP SPARE PARTS AND ROUTE TRAVEL OF RUSSIAN NAVY TO AND FROM CUBA ON REGULAR COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS, WHICH IS LESS CONVENIENT, LESS RELIABLE, LESS SECURE, AND PROBABLY MORE COSTLY.

3. SUBJECT TO YOUR CONCURRENCE AND AT A TIME WHEN YOU THINK IT APPROPRIATE, YOU SHOULD INFORM GOM AT THE LEVEL YOU BELIEVE WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE HOW THESE SOVIET FLIGHTS WHICH REFUEL AND OVERNIGHT IN RABAT IMPINGE ADVERSELY ON IMPORTANT US SECURITY INTERESTS. WE DO NOT WANT TO MAKE AN ISSUE OF THIS WITH THE MOROCCANS AND YOU SHOULD NOT PROPOSE ANY ACTION ON THEIR PART. NEVERTHELESS, OF COURSE, IMPLICATION OF YOUR RAISING THE SUBJECT IS THAT WE WOULD BE PLEASED IF GOM WERE TO REEXAMINE THE SUPPORT IT IS PROVIDING SOVIET TU-114'S WITH A VIEW TO PUTTING A STOP TO THIS UNWITTING ASSISTANCE. RECOGNIZING THAT NO ACTION MAY OCCUR FOR SOME TIME, YOU SHOULD ALSO SUGGEST THAT WE WOULD WELCOME AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON A DISCREET BASIS REGARDING THESE FLIGHTS AS LONG AS THEY CONTINUE. HABIB

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUELING, AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE, SECURITY, INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION, FOREIGN RELATIONS, TOSEC, MILITARY FLIGHT CLEARANCES, CAT-C, TU-114
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE194943
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JJHITCHCOCK:MCAULIFFE/NOYES:SW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P840089-2185
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760879/aaaacrja.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <07 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET TU-114 FLIGHTS THROUGH RABAT
TAGS: PINR, MILI, PFOR, UR, MO, US, CIA
To: RABAT SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006